THE

"HINDU MESSAGE"

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

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The Hindu Message stands for

(1) The Maintenance of British supremacy with self-government for India,

(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,

(3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,

(4) Advancement of Material prosperity on a spiritual basis and

(5) Dissemination of pure Hindu Culture.

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A Vision Of India.

SABARI'S ASHRAMA.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

Sabari's Asram shone here 'midst the light.
A huntress born she hurled her shafts of fire
At hung'ring passion and at brutal ire
And nescience dark which blinds the inner sight
And thirst for gold and pride and hatred's night
Which bar the soul's glad soaring higher and higher.
And thus she killed her inner foes entire
By Love's shafts from Devotion's bow of might.
Then Shone Sri Rama's gracious wandering feet
Like sun and moon in her hut's paradise
Which her faith's incense filled with sweet perfume
She decked Him with her blossomed song-flowers sweet
And wreath of lotus glances from her eyes
And lit the lamps of love which hearts illume.

The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING 16 JAN., 1919.

On the Eve of the Peace Congress.

It is stated that the representatives of the nations have begun to assemble in Paris to settle the affairs of the world's nations. Everywhere expectations are running high, and it is believed that all peoples are to be enabled to make a fresh start. If this belief is strongly entertained it is due to the impression created by the speeches delivered by President Wilson both in America, and in various European Capitals since his arrival in that Continent. We believe, however, that he has now *begun* to moderate his expectations. For, speaking in the Italian Parliament on the 3rd January, he said:—"We could not stand in the shadow of this war without knowing that there were things awaiting us more difficult than those we had undertaken, because while it was easy to speak of rights and justice, it was sometimes difficult to work them out in practice." The difficulty is the world-old one,—that those who enjoy privilege and power will not be willing to part with them, so long as they can enjoy the sweets of tyrannical over-lord-ship. Dr. Wilson said:—"Our task at Paris is to organise the friendship of the world." What Dr. Wilson means is the friendship of the *peoples* of the world,—for the old emperors and monarchical rulers have mostly disappeared. "These Empires," said Dr. Wilson, "held different peoples reluctantly under the coercion of force and the guidance of intrigue." Henceforth the peoples of the world at large, and of Europe in particular, are to be held together by "sympathy and friendship,"—not "by the coercive force of the military power." Dr. Wilson assures us that these sentiments and aspirations are not confined to him, but "he had found in the atmosphere of the nations he had visited a desire to do justice and establish friendliness and make peace rest on right." If this statement correctly represents the actual mind of society and government in the Allied countries of Western Europe, the United League of Nations which he has proposed as the means of preserving peace in the world in future and of regulating the relations between people by the principles of justice and right ought soon to become a *fait accompli*, and we can easily understand what is implied in Dr. Wilson's statement that "we stand at the opening of a new age in which statesmanship will lift mankind to new levels of endeavour and achievement."

In the November number of the *Fortnightly Review*, Mr. Sidney Brooks, writing on "what the War has done for America" made what now seems a prophetic statement when he said that "she (America) has risen to a height of moral leadership and authority, such as no nation has ever attained to." Dr. Wilson's notable utterances before and after his journey to Europe doubtless justify this opinion. There is no doubt that it is perfectly true that much difficulty will be experienced in "working out in practice" the noble sentiments and glowing aspirations he has expressed. But Dr. Wilson has at his back the entire democracy of the world. He spoke of the war as a

"people's war", and that means that the American *democracy* took up arms to enforce the principles of justice and fair dealing in the future relations of world's peoples. The writer in the *Fortnightly Review* already mentioned says of America:—"In no land is a leader who appeals to what is best and least material and self sacrificing in human nature more certain of a national response." Surely then Dr. Wilson ought to be able to guide the coming negotiations in such a manner as to be able to remove the "difficulty" which he has spoken of in doing justice and right and satisfying the claims to self-determination of the communities, large or small, which have hitherto been "held reluctantly under the coercion of force and the guidance of intrigue."

At the same time, we cannot disguise from ourselves the fact that there are men everywhere—self-styled leaders—whose sole mission in life is to glorify and enrich themselves by preventing the triumph of the principles of justice and right in the dealings of the world's communities with each other. It is such men who suggest or lead various aggressive movements in the world, sow discord between its communities, and pave the way to strife and to the conquest or subjection which inevitably springs from strife. Such men will muster strong in the Conference, and it is their mischievous voices and influences that will have to be withstood and overpowered by Dr. Wilson and those who support him in the establishment of his ideal of "friendship" among the world's communities.

Dr. Wilson spoke at Rome of the "different peoples reluctantly held under the coercion" of the great Empires which have now fallen to pieces in Europe. This is true of the Russian, Turkish, Austrian, and German Empires,—of one and all of them. We suppose the first task of the conference will be to liberate these people from the tyrannous yoke of the foreigners who have long held them under subjection. Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, Croatia, Finland, Jugo-Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia, &c., will all put forth their just claims to self-determination. France and Belgium will have to be restored and to receive full reparation from Germany. *Italia Irredenta* may be restored to Italy. But, as we have already said, Italy has no claims which can be placed on the same level as those of France or Belgium. Nor can we grant President Wilson's statement that "the people of Italy had entered the war for the same exalted principles of right and justice that moved his own people." Still, she has claims as a nation which will surely enlist on her behalf the enlightened sympathies of most of the assembled delegates. Then the Balkan problem will have to be faced, and it is hoped that, while the various small peoples will be fully heard and satisfied, Turkey will not be driven "bag and baggage" from the place which she has so long occupied in Europe. Surely Turkey has done a great wrong to the cause of civilisation in allying herself with the Central Powers in the Great War. But West Europe failed to interpose when Greece and the Balkan states made a war of aggression against Turkey, and we think that, but for that untoward event, she would not have placed herself in the wrong and ruined herself as she has done.

Then comes the case of the peoples

of Asia and Africa. We hope their claims to self-government will receive full and fair consideration. We think the African peoples must have their future destiny assured to them under the joint guarantee of the new League of Nations. Hitherto, Europeans have regarded them as only worthy of being slowly extirpated like the wild beasts of Africa,—being the wild men they are, and therefore incapable of attaining to the conception and status of a civilised society and people. Let us hope that, under Dr. Wilson's lead and inspiration, the "civilised" men of Europe will be able to regard them as human beings entitled to the same rights of self-determination and self-advancement as all others.

We come last to our own people and country. We do not know why India has been asked to send delegates to the Peace Conference. If this means that Great Britain thereby wishes to give India a status in her Empire similar to that of her self-governing colonies, she has certainly placed us under an immense debt of obligation. But, after all, this gives us only a *sentimental* status of honor. In order however to give us the *substantial* rights of self-determination similar to those now enjoyed by the Colonies, there is no need of India's being called to send delegates to the conference assembling at Paris. If the British Parliament and Ministry chooses, they can satisfy the claims of India *at once* by asking the bureaucratic autocracy now enthroned here to stand aside. At the same time, we, Indians, do not put forth any extravagant claims. We only ask for Provincial autonomy at present; and for the popularising, as far as possible, of the basis of the Government of India on the lines of reform which has commended itself to the authors of the Reform Report. For these indispensable improvements, no intervention or initiative from the Paris Conference is needed. What our representatives are to be called upon to do in their places there, we do not quite understand. We shall wait and see. We are quite certain that they will cover themselves with glory and bring credit to our ancient people and culture. Let us hope that their labours will also advance the cause of India's advance towards gaining the blessing of self-determination and self-respect like all other communities nestling under the shadow of Britain's glorious Empire.

"Is India Civilised" by Sir John Woodroffe.

I. The Conflict of Cultures.

This noble work is a trumpet-call to the Indians to realise their greatness and distinctiveness and build the great future of India on the solid basement of India's past achievements. At a time when the air is full of the battle cries of different schools of social and political reconstruction there has come to us this clarion voice bidding us look deep into things and attain to a unitive as opposed to a fragmentary vision of things. The work is more than a mere answer to the flippant abuse of Indian culture contained in Mr. Archer's "India and the Future." Mr. Archer's book has only precipitated into publication the surging ideas that have been generated in Sir John Woodroffe's mind by a life-long study of the Indian culture and the Indian people. Interested ignorance

secure in its isolation of distance can cry down a great culture as much as it likes. But a loving and intimate student of a great culture can and will always set matters right and win the homage of the world where homage is due.

In his valuable foreword Sir John says: "In every way, the coming assault on Hindu civilisation will be the greatest which it has ever had to endure in the whole course of its long history." That is the great danger to be guarded against. The introduction of western civilisation has been a disintegrating force everywhere, but will India add to the number of such cultural conquests? Will she not retain her own great civilisation, her own special outlook on life, her own radiant intuitions and realisations, making only a few surface changes in social and political life to suit the times! The fate of Humanity is bound up with the issue of the great cultural conflict now going on. As Sir John concludes his foreword, "if we be really vital however, we are able to, and will, maintain the present with the same splendid strength of the Racial Spirit which did the great deeds of the past."

To understand aright the conflict of cultures in our land in modern times, we must analyse the notion of *progress*. Does it mean increasing material comfort, or does it mean more? In the West "moral improvement is also looked, but as the necessary condition of an orderly, peaceful, and industrious world." But what place does increasing material comfort occupy in a scheme of true civilisation? Sir John says well: "It (civilisation) may and does produce some material comfort but this is not an end in itself, but when rightly employed, a means whereby man's mental and spiritual nature is given greater play on its increasing release from the animal cares of life." He points out how Christianity has become a political asset and how "with the discovery of America and of the East and a declining Christianity, Europe cast its eyes abroad and became predatory." Money became more important than land and vulgar nationalism and worse industrialism became the order of the day. We must hence clear our mind of cant in regard to the word "progress" which is constantly flung in our faces by friends and foes alike.

What do we mean by racial culture and racial soul? Sir John says: "Culture is an expression of the soul or subtle body (Sukshma Sarira), a mode of the manifested Self in which it is related either as religion and philosophy to the one Spiritual Principle of all—that aspect of culture in which it seeks to give expression to the Inner Reality, or in which it is related to the outer Phenomenon, a manifestation of the Life Principle as Knowledge, as Will displayed in action, and as the Beauty of all perfect natural forms......The end of culture is the realisation of the Kingdom of Heaven on *earth*,—or Earth as it is in Heaven." Culture is in short the entirety of the soul's outlook in an integrated form and in relation to the whole of life. Sir John says in beautiful and apposite words that show us well the real meaning of culture and the real significance of patriotism. "Each race both as the original typical imagination (kalpana) and its materialisation is a particular form of the general Power (Shakti) who is the Mother of all. India is thus in a

literal and not merely figurative sense the mother and (as a form of Her) the object of worship, that is God appearing as India......By India is not meant a particular stretch of the earth's surface peopled by men of varying worth and lack of it. Why should any one worship these except in the belief, that it and they are a grand display of the Power of God to whom alone all worship is due and who alone can be the inspiring principle of any effort towards national or racial regeneration and advancement." To talk of Indian patriotism while brushing aside contemptuously India's social and cultural life is a meaningless mummery. The inter-relations of racial culture and racial soul are thus admirably stated by Sir John Woodroffe. "What is called racial culture is, again, an expression of the Racial Soul enshrining Spirit, as such Soul displays itself in all those forms of thought (Jnana sakti), will (Ichcha sakti), and action (Kriya sakti) which are called Religion, Philosophy, Art, Literature, and the Institutions of social life."

When races realise their diverseness along with their fraternity then will begin the steady and united forward march of humanity. Assimilation of the one to the other is as difficult and dangerous to both as is conquest of the one by the other. Dilution and unhappiness mark the process and decay and destruction mark the conclusion. In modern India the process going on is one of acute cultural conflict. The conflict is not the less keen though every aspect of it is not visible on the surface. It is like a deep undercurrent which determines the sweep and the direction of the waters though what catches the eyes are the dancing wavelets, the froth and the foam, and the flowers floating on the agitated waters. We shall deal here with the general nature of the conflict and then with the special elements of the conflict, the elements of danger, and the elements of triumph and finally conclude this brief review by a few generel words as to how our cultural life should be jealously guarded and preserved and transmitted to posterity as the best and brightest of God's creations for the greater happiness of men and the greater glory of God.

There was a time when Asia by a succession of vast onslaughts "shook and hardened Europe to new life." But later on the conquest of the sea and the use of explosives led to the conquest of different parts of the world by Europe. There has been added "to the naked assault of the sword, economic invasions and struggles and more subtle cultural confiicts." What we see on the surface is merely the pomp and glitter of the new life, the ever-shifting bases and manifestations of life in response to new demands and new needs and new aspirations. But below the surface there is a clash of ideals and everything depends upon the aggressive and defensive vitality of our culture and our loyalty to it if we are to keep our racial soul unsubdued. Sir John Woodroffe points out that one reason of the attempted cultural domination of the East by the West is to minimise the coloured peril by making it ineffectual and impotent by the masculation and conquest and annihilation of the culture of the East. This general aspect of the cultural conflict is thus summed up by Sir John Woodroffe. "The coloured peril and

the world-peace will, it is thought, be more vastly diminished if the East is Westernised than if it retains its secular ideals and practices alien to the life of Europe. The cultural attack by Europe on the East is, in short, an effort to save its own psychic possessions by the assimilation of that which opposes them, and (let me at once say it) this is for Europe, in this era of conflict, right, if done in sincerity and with truth, for each must defend his own. Similarly India's Dharma is to stand by Her cultural inheritance and to repel all attacks upon it. Were the English to absorb the Indian civilisation which the spread of the English language, ideas, and customs threaten, its people would not be monsters on that account. The act would only show that those of this country are fit to be eaten. It is for them to say whether they shall be so or not."

Notes and Comments.

The *Desabhaktan* is an ably-conducted Tamil daily paper in Madras. We are happy to be able to say that we are in general agreement with its policy and principles in most matters. Hence we wish to explain certain views of ours in regard to which the paper takes us to task in its issue of January 3rd last. *First*, it says that there is some criticism or other of Mrs. Besant in almost every issue of our paper. We admit we have frequently criticised her policy and principles. We cannot help doing so. For, her attitude to Hindu religious and social ideals and her influence over certain Hindus render it inevitable that we who differ from her should expose her errors. We, as Hindus, are also opposed to her creed of theosophy, and we think she is misleading her Hindu followers by attempting to identify her occultism with Hinduism. This also enforces on us the necessity of criticising her views.—*Secondly*, the *Desabhaktan* says that, even if we differ from her in religion and ethics, we ought not to attack her politics, and that we are wrong in thinking that we do not owe to her our present political advance. In regard to this, we have to say that we only object to the error of *exaggerating* the value of her help. For instance it is an error to say that we owe *entirely* to her the announcement of the 20th August 1917. We still think we owe it *chiefly* to India's sacrifices and services during the War now happily ended. We are not prepared to attribute it, wholly or chiefly, even to the great work done by the Congress during 35 years past. None, therefore, need take us to task for our refusing to admit that we owe it, wholly or chiefly, to Mrs. Besant. At the same time, our readers ought to know that we do not place much reliance on Mrs. Besant's steadfastness as a public worker. And this is once more shown in her differences with the Congress at Delhi. We fear that already she has begun to trust more to her own Home Rule organisation than to that of the Congress for her future work in the field of Indian politics. *Lastly*, we wish to quote the following sentence from our article on Mrs. Besant:—"We do *not* say that Mrs. Besant is responsible for their introduction (*i.e*, the introduction of conflict and disturbance) and working in our midst and for all the disadvantages, social and other, arising from them. It is her admirers who claim that she has been the leader in all the recent political, social, educational, labour, and other movements." Our object was chiefly to expose the statements made, and the claims advanced, on her behalf by her over-ardent friends. It must not also be forgotten that, by thanking her admirers for their words of praise, she herself admits, in some measure, the correctness of what they say on her behalf

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Swami Vivekananda, writing to a brother-Sannyasin of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, wrote as long ago as 1895:—"Our nation is totally lacking in the faculty of organisation." "The first requisite for organisation is obedience.

I do a little bit of work when I feel so disposed, and then let it go to the dogs,—this kind of work is of no avail. We must have plodding industry and perseverance. Keep a regular correspondence, I mean, make it a point to write to me every month, or twice a month, what work you are doing and what has been its outcome." It is the custodians of Dharma or true Hinduism that seem to have become most weary of the work of watching entrusted to them by the Rishis. Our enemies are active,—ever on the alert to discover every unguarded loophole and take advantage of it. They are numerous, and also determined on our ruin. Still, we maintain our unshastraic sub-divisions and even attempt to bolster up our sectarian trifles and foibles. When shall we learn the value and wisdom of Union and organisation? When shall we give up our sectional movements and sectarian organisations, and try to rebuild Hinduism on the eternal foundations of Chaturvarnya and Dharma as laid down by the Rishis?

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Lord Sydenham of Combe has evidently been an apt pupil of the "non-Brahmin" apostle to England, Dr. Nair. In his article on "India and Mr. Charles Roberts, M.P.," in the *Contemporary Review*, he writes:—"If, as is proposed, the great public services are emasculated, then the old fierce animosities will break out afresh, and, assisted by a recrudescence of the reactionary forces of Brahmanism, they will within a few years bring to nought the noblest work which the British race has ever accomplished. In the *first* place, it is absurd to suppose that the public services will be "emasculated" if they are administered by Indian, and not by British, officials! Indian administrators have proved most successful both in British India and in the Native States,—quite as successful as British administrators. *Secondly*, there is nothing reactionary in Brahmanism. The late Prof. Max Muller has called it "the most sublime philosophy and the most satisfying religion." Of course, nobody ever expected a sun-dried bureaucrat to appreciate the priceless truths and consolations of the religion of the Indian sages. He may have to pass a hundred births before he will be fit for the comprehension of the principles and processes which prepare the soul of man for freedom from the bondage of matter. The sun-dried bureaucrat can only look on India as a field of exploitation and aggression, and never as the holy land of the greatest sages, saints, and teachers who have lived on earth.

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In India, our *Karma* doctrine is often perverted by its Western enemies, the Christian Missionaries who are paid to convert us to Christianity. They confound it with the doctrine known as Fatalism. Nothing can be more absurd. The Revd. Dr. Mackintosh, who writes in the November number of the *Contemporary Review*, states what is meant by Fate. We shall give his views, and test our Karma doctrine in the light afforded by them, *First.* "Fate means that human experience as a whole and in detail is devoid of any controlling purpose in any sense."—Karma means doing the will of God with a view to obtain freedom from the recurring cycle of re-births. Hence Karma is the reverse of Fate. *Secondly.* "Fate is indifferent to morality."—Karma means only such acts as are ordained by the will of God,—what we call *Sat-Karma*, or ordained duty. *Thirdly.* "Fate cannot recognise or care for the individual." Karma is that which God has ordained for the benefit of the individual and in order that the individual may be aided in accomplishing the destiny which the Creator has fixed as the goal he is to reach,—*viz.*, eternal bliss.

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Hinduism has ever insisted that both Daiva (God's help) and *purushakara* (human effort) combine to determine the life of man here and hereafter,—the happiness and misery which is his lot. Hence, there is *no room* in our religion for any such blind force as Fate in determining man's destiny. The Hindu doctrine is summed up in the well-known maxim,—"Heaven helps those who help themselves."

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Lord Sydenham's love of truth comes out clearly when he calls Dr Nair, "the very able leader of the non-Brahmans of South India." That one who has occupied the position of an Indian Governor and poses as an interested adviser of the British Cabinet shoud give currency to so unfounded a statement is indeed a marvel. Dr. Nair is not recognised by the large majority of the non-Brahmins here as their leader. They have frequently disowned him in public meetings. It is only the small minority who are content to serve as the tool of the bureaucracy which has never wished India well, that own Dr. Nair as their spokesman and representative.

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Like Lord Salisbury who once pleaded with the British Demos for "twenty years of strong government" as the only means of removing Irish discontent, Lord Sydenham of Combe asserts that "only strong government can be understood by and can keep order" among the people of India. Has Ireland become contented and peaceful by "strong government." The truth is that even "good government can be no substitute for self-government. When once the idea of self-government is born amidst a people, it will never again leave them. The Indians are a peaceful and loyal people, but it is impossible that they will ever again be satisfied to be misruled by a selfish and power-loving bureaucracy. The progress towards freedom may be slow and even painful, but Indians cannot rest till they too achieve the status of the self-governing Dominions and Colonies of the Empire

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A woman who writes in the *Contemporary Review* for November 1918—Dorothea Price Hughes—says :—"Of all human functions motherhood has seemed at times the most despised." How different the state of things in India! The mother is to the Hindu even as God Himself,—the "first God" he knows. We do not reverence and worship her because she fulfils a certain "*human function*," but for her own sake, *i. e.*, because she is herself and we feel an *instinctive devotion and love* for her. We offer her the worship and adoration of our hearts. She is, for the Hindu at least, no mere "functionary" who fulfils a necessary social duty and is rewarded by us for it. She is a deity to be worshipped, and this is a tradition which goes straight up to the Vedas themselves. For the—Upanishad says :—"मातृदेवो भवा" "Thou shall regard thy mother as a deity." As Sri Sankaracharya explains :—"देवतावदुपास्या" "She is to be worshipped as a deity."

Olla Podrda.

The New Year has begun and so has the shower of calendars. One great value of calendars is that they enable us to see the end of the year at the beginning and thus develop supranormal vision in us. The most important of the calendars is of course the scout calendar.

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The great British Election is the talk of the day. But Mr. Gibson Bowles wants each M. P. to take 3 pledges : (1) To attend Parliament regularly ; (2) to vote according to his conscience ; (3) not to accept office. So human nature is the same all the world over. The only difference is in the knowledge and the practice of the art of window-dressing.

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In India the All India Ladies Conference has conferred the franchise on all women. The ladies are not content with this. They have proved their fitness for the vote by staging the *Merchant of Venice* before the Madras public. Did not Portia solve the problem that the wit of man could not solve ?

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The Adi Dravidas conferred recently at Trichinopoly and banished all social gradations.

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In Europe Bolshevism and the Red Terror are running amuck. Liebknecht slept in the Kaiser's bedchamber. When the corpses of yesterday become the men of today, the men of today become the corpses of tomorrow. Europe goes round

and round spinning in a mad whirl and calls it progress and we wonder with a foolish face of praise.

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Bolshevism has declared war on British capitalism. The latter does not like it and so we may expect the aftermath of the war to go.

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Meantime Sir Charles Walston wants to establish an "autonomous supernational court." The whole thing is bewildering in the extreme. *Life is not meant to be lived but to be talked to death.*

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Ergo the Indians of today are talking at each other—sometimes swearing at each other and still more rarely hitting at each other—over the M. C. Report and Patel's bill. Four parties have emerged out of the political chaos and are preparing a more frantic chaos. One party does not want the M. C. scheme as whatever is is best; another wants it with a little dilution; a third wants it with considerable dilution, and the fourth does not want it, as whatever is not is best. The inmates of one party are suddenly found in another party when the curtain goes up. Each time the curtain goes up fresh assortments are found. All the people talk all the year round. Nobody reads anything but newspapers. As if this was not enough, Patel's bill has come. New elements of soreness have come into the society and verbal convulsions are shattering the few elements of peace still left. But I forget that this is progress.

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Progress and strenuous life !!! That is the summation of human life. It is a pity however that Mr. Roosevelt, the author of *The Strenuous Life*, has been vanquished by the still more strenuous Death.

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Germany is now displaying the strenuous life to the utmost. The cry is "Down with the Sportacusers." What a beautiful name. Thousands of *unemployed of both sexes* are *busy* making demonstrations. If they are busy why call them unemployed? Each demonstration results in a certain number of corpses. That is strenuous life.

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The Hindu asks in a thundering leader on *Trade Altruism* on 2th January why when other people are making money India is sitting "with folded hands." Why, indeed? Because the unemployed of both sexes are making verbal demonstrations. But we shall take care that the number of corpses does not increase.

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Even here our old friends—influenza, cholera, and plague will not let us be.

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Trade indeed! What have we to do with such a plebeian thing? Look at Trichinopoly! Everyday a battle royal is raged in the evening for Kerosene. Bottles and heads are broken and oil and blood flow together. Will some honourable member have the curfew law enacted?

SCRUTATOR.

The Central Idea of the Bhagavad Gita.

[*From the Report of the Presidential Address of* DR. RADHAKUMUD MOOKARJI VIDYAVAIBHAVA, M.A. PH. D., P.R.S. *on the occasion of the Krishnashtami Day Celebration at Mysore.*]

One of the duties expected of me tonight is to address you a few words, but all that I can do is to beat about the bush, for I do not dare speak much about the subject itself. It will be a sheer profanation, nay, a sacrilege, to deal with it directly, because we Hindus believe that Sri Krishna is not a mere incarnation of God, but that He is God Himself, and how can an imperfect mortal aspire to speak of the Absolute and the Perfect, unless he himself is an earnest religious devotee, having a first hand knowledge and experience of the Lord Sri Krishna? Therefore, I shall only treat of this topic in an indirect fashion and try to fulfil the part that belongs to one who is commissioned to maintain the order of the meeting...I propose to confine my observations to the teachings of the Bhagavadgita as the literary work traditionally connected with, and

attributed to Sri Krishna. I leave to historians the perplexing problem of the reality of Sri Krishna's authorship of that book. I am not concerned with that here. In the first place, I should like to say that the Bhagavadgita is not of an age or of a clime but belongs to all ages and climes, because it embodies the lessons which are meant for humanity all over the world. In this have been tackled some of the eternal problems of human life which are independent of the limits of time and space. This book is one of the greatest masterpieces of Sanskrit literature, the like of which can hardly be found in its entire range. This is a book that properly belongs to the entire human race. It is not connected with a particular caste, creed or colour but it is a book that is useful for all, resting upon the eternal truths of life. Therefore, it is appreciated by every school of thought. Western writers have acknowledged that they have been inspired by this book.

Even the subject before me, as I have limited it, is too vast to be adequately dealt with on the present occasion. I would simply confine my attention to what I regard as the very central idea or factor of the Bhagavadgita. You know how the teachings of the Gita were imparted to Arjuna in the midst of a great war. That war, it must be understood, was essentially a Holy war, a religious war. This is shown by the very first word "Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre". A Holy war or religious war is that which is waged for the cause of righteousness. Arjuna refuses to fight because it will mean the killing of his dear and near relations, nay, even of his elders, superiors, and preceptors, for what may be called a mess of pottage, viz., the winning of a kingdom as Arjuna understood it. Sri Krishna, however, does not appreciate this attitude of Arjuna who, was blind to the proper significance of the coming conflict, for he does not sufficiently recognise the fact that it was after all a holy cause which has to be supported by the fight. He who does not fight for a righteous cause, he who does not take active part in a war waged on behalf of his religion, is not entitled to be regarded as a moral man or to be called a religious man. To be virtuous is not to be merely idle, passive and inactive. The good in the universe cannot justly occupy the position of the silent spectator of the domination of the evil. This is the great teaching of the Bhagavadgita and you must take leave of the narrow notions which seek to connect the Hindu conception of morality and religion with a scheme of idle inactivity or an attitude of passivity. The Bhagavadgita presents to us most clearly and emphatically the ideal of aggressive virtue akin to that of the European knight of the middle ages who rides about redressing human wrongs. Virtue may be nourished in cloistered seclusion but must be tested in its fight with the evil which is bound to be forced on it. There is a perpetual and eternal conflict going on between the good and the evil in the world in every moment in the life of every individual and the proper virtue must needs be of the aggressive type as represented in the Bhagavadgita.

This great teaching has its value in all ages and in all countries. It has supreme value in the world in its present crisis, for, what is the principle on which the stupendous World-War was waged? It is the principle of establishing right against the tyranny of might or mere brute force. This is the great principle on which America joined the allies. Right must be established and protected against the autocratic invasions of mere physical force. Is this not also the great eternal truth that has been so beautifully presented to us in the teachings of the Gita? Arjuna stands face to face with his relations but he was in fact fighting a religious battle. Arjuna should have no other alternative but to fight for the good of his race. He ought not to think of assuming on that tremendous occasion a mood of inactivity. Mere temporal relationship must not be allowed to blind us to the primacy of religious duties which must be discharged in the face of all odds. This particular teaching which the Bhagavadgita emphasises is not at all incosistent with that of our

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most authoritative religious literature. If you, for instance, refer to the literature of the Vedas from which has flowed the entire stream of religious thought, if you consider the lessons of the Rigveda, you will find the same truth being borne in upon you. We find the Vedic Rishis were, as a rule, taking active part in the politics of the country. They were even leading their respective peoples to fight in battles which were religious battles, battles that were fought for the protection of the Aryan religion, battles to protect the freedom of the new faith against the invasion of the non-Aryan religions. Accordingly you find that the highest class of society, the Brahmins who have ordinarily taken leave of worldly affairs and have ceased to concern themselves with the present in order to devote wholly to the great hereafter and the life beyond the grave have participated actively in the Holy Wars of the period. The Vedic examples are supported by many epic precedents of Brahmins taking up arms whenever the interests of the country demanded it. Later on, we find this principle being established as the law of the land which lays down that it is a sacred duty to fight for the nation's cause. The Hindu law books are unanimous on this point. The commentators of the Hindu law expressly explain that when the liberties of the country are threatened by a foreign foe, all classes of society including the Brahmins must fight to avert that calamity, for the victory of the foreigner will mean the death of the very religion of which the highest caste regards itself as the custodian.

In this connection I may refer to a school of thought which holds the opinion that war, being an absolute evil must always be avoided. In its opinion the end does not justify the means. The Bhagavadgita does not belong to this school of thought, for it recognises difference in moral requirements according to the difference in the conditions of various classes. The Bhagavadgita holds that it is not our duty to be mere idle spectators when justice is assailed by injustice. I am reminded in this connection, as a reply to the critics of this school, of the *sacred lie* which Shakespeare puts into the dying, and the very last, words of Desdemona denying that her husband was her true assassin, and not telling the narrow truth which would have completely murdered the character of that supremely chaste woman.

Musings from Mangalore.

History, it has been said, cannot be written with a microscope. If this is the case when the Historian happens to be a son of the soil deeply rooted in its interests, much more is this true when the historian happens to be a foreigner. Hasty generalisations, ignorant misconstructions and intentional insinuations are certain to crop up. A particular act of Clive or a particular motive of Hastings may be so magnified, that English character as a whole may suffer somewhat in the world's opinion. It is not a few individuals, much less their occasional lapses, that must be made the standard in the judgment of a Race. And yet, incredible as it might seem, such unwarranted generalisations are hourly made and men and nations damned without any scruples of conscience.

Of all the nations that have suffered from the effects of this kind of misrepresentation Indians are the chief. Mahamadans. Xians, or Hindus, they have been equally styled as superstitious, self-seeking, cowardly, false and fickle. How far Macaulay for all the time poisoned the public opinion of Bengali character may be a question for the mathematical Historian to consider. But that we have been grossly abused in works of history, there is no question. Take any of the Historical readers intended for the youth of England, and opening the chapters relating to their achievements in India, you would make the discovery that before the English came, India was but a chaos 'of blackest midnight-born.' The young would-be I.C.S. is fed upon this history and the illustrations of dancing girls fills his mind with the wealth of India, while the pictures of Brahmins (especially of South India),

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present to his horrified eyes types of absolute, unmitigated ugliness. If after crossing the sea, the *Head* of the District comes to see that the Devils are not so dark as they are p inted. Why—let the Indians bless the lucky stars; favoured people!

It is not only school books that are so inconsiderately written and circulated. But even standard works of even higher pretensions are not quite free from such blemishes. The greatest evil is done when the authors believe in the truth of their assertions about Indians and when it becomes a conviction that the Indian could never be too much vilified, truth is set in the pillory and unconscious self-interest feels itself supremely righteous.

This campain of vilification presses into its service not only approved history but also accredited fiction; the more so, because fiction is often taken for fact in-masquerade. The so-called novels of Anglo-Indian life (which are wisely confined to circulate in India and the colonies) deal incidentally with some aspects of Indian life and character. And any careful reader can see that the Saheb is acquainted only with a limited section of the Indian people—of the barber, the butler, the card-sharper and camp-clerk type. Of course the cook deserves the honour of separate mention. For is he not in the good books of his master who has financed him in his multiplicity of marriages? There is no point in talking of the Morality or otherwise of Indians or Europeans; for, but for the frailties of both the Eurasian is impossible. But a systematic display of everything weak in the Indian and an equally systematic advertisement of the Manly virtues of the European, both drawn on a very large scale is calculated to emphasise the differences of race and of culture—which after all are not so great but that we can join hands in all matters relating to common humanity. Pride spiritual and racial so far succeeds in keeping common folk at arms length, that what should prove otherwise a trysting place of the nations of the world becomes their battle-ground. But the recent events of the worldwar are pregnant with the hopes of better future.

Patriotism frequently turns into junkerism and thence degenerates into jingoism. The transition we think is gradual—so gradual indeed that the subject of this subtle change is not at all conscious of this Psychology. When however the perversion is complete he bursts into song! How often has poetry been debased—the highest gift of God? How often has the mad cry for blood for pure Lust's sake, found expression in verse, making the Worse seem the better reason? How often has been success in war its only justification and some crowing verse its only result? Sons of the Dragon's teeth! Alas, for Humanity!

We have no quarrel with the higher function of Poetry. But when the poet is lost in the Patriot and he in the Partisan, when the fire that touched his lips is utilised only to light his cigaret end—*that* is a tragedy deeply profound. And what is more, when you present the world with the best that you can there is an innate tendency that people gravitate to what is feeble, and false in it and forget what is noble and great in it. When every stump orator quotes

> Kipling East is east and West is west'
> And the twain shall never meet',

We wonder if he knows what the next lines are!

There is not a poet more sinned against than sinning than Kipling and perhaps no novelist more misunderstood than Anstey. But the error consists in this that when they would be serious they are humorous and when they would be heroes they are herods. In literature as in cooking, a thing that is overdone loses all its richness of flavour.

We have so far been concerned with the blackmagic work of foreigners in literature and art that has been the cause of India's present position in the estimation of the world. And now, we turn to the dear enemies of India whose defection is all the more inexcusable because they happen to be her own children. We shall not judge of their motives, nor their hopes nor their fears; but only pray God that in His own good time he might give them power to see and distinguish between the false and the true, between right and wrong. In the better days that are to come may we have more severe standards for our own conduct and less severe ones in judging of our fellow-men.

Alpha.

Answers to Questions by the University Commission (Calcutta).

(BY A MADRAS PROFESSOR).

(*continued.*)

[Note.—The answers to the questions are not given in the order in which the questions are issued. The continuity of my answers depends, therefore, on the order that I have adopted in setting forth the answers.]

QUESTION XII

There is no use thinking of the *scientific* study of the Vernaculars, when the purely *literary* study of Vernaculars is not taken up by students under the present system.

One Vernacular language or Sanskrit *must* be studied by all students at all stages in the course of their education, and provision for instruction in the scientific methods of studying the Vernacular and Sanskrit Literatures should be made in the College classes. I think sincerely that the talk of the application of scientific methods to the study of the Vernaculars is mere *sham*, when a good *literary* knowledge of the Vernaculars is not ensured. The subjects in English for the Intermediate and B.A. Examinations could be conveniently lessened and the Vernaculars be made *compulsory*. The present *Vernacular Composition* is no test at all. In B A. there is almost no talk at all of the Vernaculars at present. *Non-Detailed Composition* has not worked in the manner in which it was meant to work and as long as notes-makers and summary-publishers have to earn their living, non-detailed Composition cannot be a success. The general capacity of the student to express himself in English is considerably impeded by this non-detailed Composition. And my experience has shown that, since the introduction of non-detailed Composition in the High School and the College classes, the level of thinking among students has fallen very low. Students now cannot write a decent essay on a general topic, abstract or concrete. In the place of this non-detailed Composition, we may very well have Vernacular and Sanskrit text books introduced for study.

QUESTION XIII

The answer to this question depends on the aim of the University. My view on this point has been expressed under other questions.

QUESTION VIII

The present conditions of admission to Colleges in this University are naturally evolved from the requirements of the School Final system.

The aim of the School Final system is to create men with *very average* culture for the lower grades of service or as an additional qualification for men of various professions, whereas, the aim of the University is to give *very high* culture, to train students for all that is best in life. Naturally, therefore, passage from the former to the latter involves great hardship to several students at present. Most students find their college lives, real bewilderment at least for a year or two. My own experience has led me to think that the first year of the present Intermediate course serves as a preparatory year for the real University course, so that several students at present find the second year not sufficient to come up to the standard of the Intermediate Examination, and so several students really pass the Intermediate only in the second chance. If the present system cannot be altered, so as to bring the whole training of a boy from the lowest standard to the highest under the hands of the University, it will be necessary for boys to spend at least a year after the school Final course is over, as a year of preparation for the University.

To have this done, I would suggest the First year of the Collegiate course to be considered a preporatory year, at the end of which there must be a University Examination, on the results of which, students should be taken up for higher collegiate training. The students thus entering upon the collegiate course may have *one* University Examination at the end of *three* years for the

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pass B.A. Degree and at the end of *five* years for the Honours B.A. Degree, which should directly entitle the student to the M.A. Degree.

The present School Final system and its sequel, the admission of students to colleges on the strength of the School Final marks, with all the averages and percentages, does not, in my opinion, serve the real needs of higher collegiate education.

QUESTION II

This is a very important question and in the answer to this are involved really the great problems connected with our modern system of education.

The Teacher's profession must be made very attractive to the best intellects of the University, by means of liberal salaries and adequate prospects. This is now the "*sorriest of trades*," and there seems to be no prospect of its ever being looked upon as more than a "trade," as long as the present way of dealing with the teaching profession exists. The teacher is invariably underpaid and discontented. He has no means of adding to his income, even by questionable methods, as is possible in the case of some other professions. The teacher of the youngest children of our country is really a specimen of humanity fit for a famine Museum. Much of intelligent work is expected from him. The direct method of teaching English," the great problems of "Vernacular media of instruction" &c., the great theories of "concrete to abstract," "known to unknown," the great principles of "concentric method" &c.—all depend for their success on this poor emaciated teacher, who is paid hardly enough for his livelihood. This teacher who, uncultured or ill-cultured as he is, has to be a specimen of character and an example to the little children that are entrusted to his care. The foundations thus laid by such a teacher, we think of erecting a beautiful edifice in the secondary and collegiate educational systems.

As long as we cannot get the best men to take charge of elementary education, our secondary and collegiate education cannot be bettered. Education is not to be valued in terms of Rupees, annas and pies. The pay should not be regulated as it is now. If we pay Rs. 7 to an ill-charactered, unprincipled, and famished primary passed man and ask him to teach the 1st standard and the 2nd standard in the Primary section, we cannot get intellectual giants and "Rishies" out of these children in the collegiate classes. That was why our ancients entrusted boys of seven to the care of *the best and the holiest gurus* they could get. The best men must be taken as teachers on high salaries, so that they may be above want always and to each of them must be entrusted a certain number, of children to be trained in his own way. In the *Home section* of the University, according to my scheme, the boys must be guided throughout by this *guru* in every point. The teacher himself must be a model to the children under his care. If he is not, he will soon lose his hold on the children and he *will* go his way duly. In the *Culture section*, we may have these teachers lecturing to the higher classes, according to their efficiency in different subjects. It is necessary in my opinion, that at least upto the fourth form, boys *must all* be under the intellectual and spiritual control of *one* good teacher. The evil of our present system, in my opinion, is the *extravagant* notion entertained of the value of *specialisation*. Specialisation is only valuable in the higher stages of education. *A fair high degree of general culture must precede specialisation.*

The present Hostel system, as an *adjunct* to college and school life, is, in my opinion, very inadequate for the proper training of students or for the *true* influence of teachers over students.

Libraries, Laboratories &c. will all be of immense value, if the teacher takes a *living* interest in the students and their welfare, and if the students have *real* respect for their teacher.

If we bring together a teacher and his students from the earliest years, the teacher will really be *in loco parentis* to the boys, and the students will imbibe culture and character, and the teacher will use all his time for the improvement of his boys, physically, intellectually, morally, and spiritually. Even though there are different religions and consequently different methods of training boys, in accordance with the different faiths, yet in a properly constituted University, it must be possible to find

competent teachers of different faiths for the boys of the different faiths.

There will be no need then for "the conscience clause" and all the modern cries for "moral and religious instruction" in schools and colleges, which will in no way make education a bit more *living* than it is at present. I do not think that the present view of the function of a University will ever lead to real love for work among teachers and love for culture among students. I may appear to take an extreme view of the case, but I believe I have taken this view after very careful thought over the question. I can give facts and figure throughout to establish my position, if needed.

(To be continued.)

Sir S. P. Sinha Kt., K.C., P.C.

Cold must be the heart of the Indian that does not feel a thrill of joy at the elevation of the Right Hon'ble Sir S. P. Sinha Kt., K.C., P.C., to be the Under-Secretary of State for India. The appointment has come as a most welcome and agreeable surprise not even dreamt of either in England or in India. It is a move in the right direction illustrative of highest political wisdom. It is a redemption of the solemn pledges graciously given in her Proclamation of 1858 by the Great Queen Empress, Victoria the Good, of blessed memory, to the effect that no consideration of caste, colour or creed will be allowed to prevail in the matter of the appointment of Indians to high posts. It is a very bold step taken by Mr. Lloyd George and we are glad that his choice on the occasion of this unique innovation has fallen on one who is acknowledged to be one of the ablest Indians of the day possessing most sound and practical views on all questions affecting the welfare of this country and who, we are sure, will do ample justice to his appointment. This is the first time in the annals of history when an Indian is admitted as a member of the British Government and the bestowal of a Peerage on him will be still more unique and there is no doubt that he eminently deserves the distinction.

Though this appointment will last only for the life time of this Ministry the Peerage would last till the end of his life and thus as a member of the Upper House Sir S. P. Sinha would have unique opportunities of advocating the cause of his country in that stronghold of conservatism and prejudice and he is sure to be listened to with attention and regard since as a member of the War Cabinet and the Peace Conference, he has earned a name for sobriety of judgment, saneness of views and soundness of statesmanship. He was the first Indian to be appointed as the Advocate General of Calcutta, he was the first Indian to be the member of the Executive Council of His Excellency the Viceroy, he was the first Indian to be invited to the War Cabinet and the Peace Conference and now he is the first Indian to be admitted into the inner workings of the British Ministry. We are sure he would use all available opportunities to promote the interests of his country. The fact that he is about to be raised to the Peerage brings before our mind's eye the vision of an Indian Viceroy and an Indian Secretary of State at no distant future. May he live long, an ornament to his country and the pride of his countrymen.

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